

BELFAST STREET NAMES

Newsletter no 2

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UPDATE ON DEVELOPMENTS

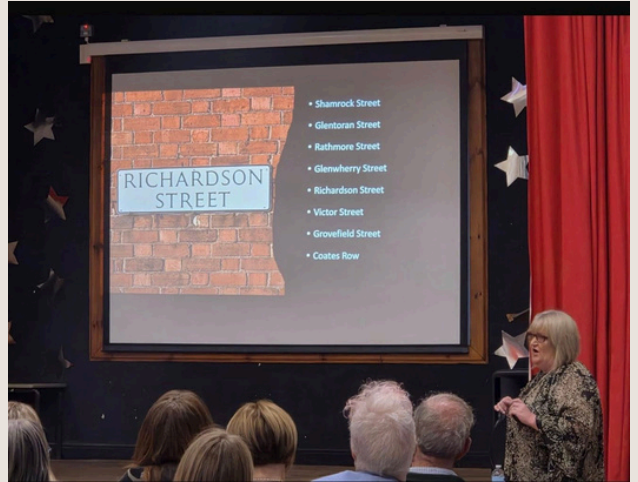
Belfast Street Names has delivered or hosted eight talks to the public and community groups since the project was established just over two years ago. At our AGM on February 16 the guest speaker was Nigel Henderson of History Hub Ulster. Nigel's talk dealt with Admirals, Generals and Battles commemorated in Belfast street names. Nigel made this talk available in the blog section of our website.



Nigel Henderson delivering the address at the AGM
(Photo: Heather Lindsay)

Martin Magill and Paul Tempan prepared a research paper over the winter on some exotic-looking street-names which contain place-names from abroad, like Cairo Street in the "Holy Land", Lucerne Parade in Stranmillis and Crimea Street in Shankill. They investigated different motivations for these names, such as commemoration, personal association and marketing.

Lisa Rea Currie helped solve some puzzling names, and the paper was delivered to the Society for Name Studies in Britain and Ireland (SNSBI) at its annual conference in Bury St Edmunds on March 28.



Judith Acheson giving a talk in Nettlefield Primary School
(Photo: Nicole Hamilton)

On April 30 Judith Acheson gave a talk entitled "The Story of Nettlefield", which covered the history of Nettlefield Primary School, the big house which preceded it, the Lewis family who lived there and the streets situated on the former estate.



FALLS ROAD BUT NOT AS WE KNOW IT



Photo: Patricia Kelly

This Falls Road is on Mt. Dandenong, Victoria.



The area was planned as a kind of suburban escape – even advertised using the Latin phrase “rus in urbe”, meaning “the countryside in the city.” Cliftonville was designed as a villa-style development, though the original plans were only partly completed. (Belfast Street Names Team)

The Jaffé National Public Elementary School (later known as the Jaffe National Memorial School) was established in 1907 by Sir Otto Jaffé, a prominent Jewish linen merchant and twice Lord Mayor of Belfast. It provided both secular and Jewish religious education to the community. (provided by Nigel Henderson).

We’re delighted to introduce a new feature across our Facebook and Instagram platforms: Street of the Week. Each week, we shine a spotlight on one Belfast street to explore its history, character, architecture, and the stories that make it unique. It’s a way of celebrating the rich and often overlooked detail of the city’s built heritage, one street at a time.

At the heart of Belfast Street Names is a focus on the origins and meanings of our street names. We are particularly keen to hear from readers who may know something about the stories behind them—local knowledge, family memories, or historical insights that might otherwise be lost.

We began with Cliftonville Road, highlighting the remarkable diversity and depth of history that can be found in a single place—reminding us that every street has a story worth telling. If you have a street you’d like us to feature, please get in touch with your suggestions. Your ideas and insights will help shape future editions of Street of the Week.



Sir Otto Jaffé (1846–1929), Lord Mayor of Belfast and founder of the Jaffé National School (1907).

Conundrum Corner

Just down the road from Nonplus Heights, we veer off along Flummox Avenue and soon enough we're at Conundrum Corner again.

CAN YOU SOLVE THESE BELFAST STREET NAME PUZZLES?

MOONSTONE STREET (BT9)

may be connected with Wilkie Collins' 1868 detective novel *The Moonstone*. Nearby on Lisburn Road was Craighernie Terrace (1894), the name apparently taken from another Collins novel, 'Man And Wife' (1870). But can one of our streetwise sleuths account for Capstone Street and Larkstone Street in this neighbourhood?



DENORRTON PARK (BT4)

looks like a portmanteau name, made of different words or word-parts smashed together, but what are the parts? The first bit may be the Den, residence of shipbuilder Gustav Wolff, which was in this locality. Is Orr the familiar surname? What is -ton? Or is a different structure involved?

DUB LANE (BT9)

the Dub Tea Rooms existed on Upper Malone Road in the early 20th century and the name has also been applied to the sports fields of QUB, but where does it come from?

DRENIA (BT11)

one-word street-names are something of a rarity. Is this street in Ladybrook named after Drenia, a group of Greek islands? Or is it just a mis-spelling of Drenta, a minor-name (old house name?) down the road in Dunmurry? If so, what does Drenta mean? And what language is it from?

LISMOYNE PARK (BT15)

possibly named after the house Lismoyne which was situated on the west bank of the Lagan, almost opposite the mill village of Edenderry. But if so, why is this street in North Belfast? Or does it have a different explanation?

The Lord Mayor And His Coachman

Get all the way round Belfast without once passing through a street???. Reckon it can't be done???. The Lord Mayor did.... and he lost the wager. Listen to Maurice Leyden sing all about it at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p01yt09q>



Researching Belfast Street Names

from archive to public history

by Nicole Hamilton



As part of my Public History Masters degree at Queen's University Belfast, I had the opportunity to undertake a placement with Belfast Street Names in 2024. This experience allowed me to contribute to the project's research into the processes behind street naming, while also uncovering the people, decisions, and historical moments embedded within Belfast's urban landscape. Over the course of the placement, I spent 30 days working directly with archival material, reading records, extracting key details, and building a clearer picture of how Belfast's streets came to be named.

My primary focus was the Minute Books of the Town Improvement Committee, held at the Public Records Office of Northern Ireland. I worked through 19 volumes spanning catalogue references LA/7/20/AA/23 to LA/7/20/AA/42, which covered the period of 1921 to 1967. This period appealed to my personal interest as it captured major changes in the city across partition, the Second World War, and post-war developments.

The Minute Books were a detailed primary source that highlighted how applications for street names were recorded with information; such as the date of proposal, the developer involved, and sometimes the reasoning or person being commemorated. Working through these records allowed me to build a dataset that showed patterns in who was naming streets and when.

Minutes of Belfast Corporation and later Belfast City Council are held in PRONI

I am now involved in the social media side of Belfast Street Names, creating posts that share research in a more accessible way and encourage public engagement. This has included developing a "Street of the Week" feature, which highlights individual streets, explores their origins, and invites people to share their own memories and connections. It brings archival research into conversation with lived experience in our city today.